

# THE JOB INTERVIEW



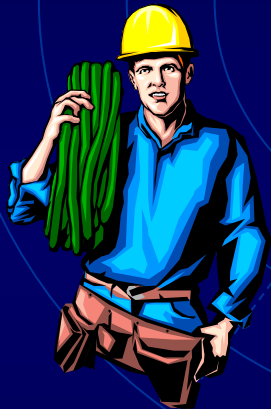
**THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS PROVIDED TO ASSIST  
YOU WITH PREPARATION AND TIPS ON ACHIEVING A  
SUCCESSFUL JOB INTERVIEW**



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# Livingston Job Service

Livingston, Montana



Montana Department of  
**LABOR & INDUSTRY**  
Workforce Services Division



**Job Listings generally contain a combination of information that includes a brief description of the job, job applicant qualifications and desired qualities. These elements are the **keys** you need in order to prepare for an Interview.**



**When you are viewing a job listing at Job Service, look for keywords such as:**

**JOB TITLE**

**DUTIES**

**QUALIFICATIONS**

**REQUIREMENTS**

**EDUCATION**

**SKILLS**

**Job Descriptions include the knowledge, skills and abilities (also called KSA's) that are required for a particular job.**



**Knowledge** – is information applied directly to the performance of a function. For example, managing is a knowledge.

**Skills** – are tasks that are learned. In the job ad, it mentions having sales skills. Other examples might be operating a computer, writing effectively or your typing efficiency.

**Abilities** – are the performance of behaviors that you can see. In the job ad, customer service is an ability because your service performance can be seen.

In addition to **KSA's**, it is a good idea to think about the knowledge and skills specific to the job that you are interviewing for.

For example, a truck driver will have knowledge about driving and road conditions specific to operating a truck safely.

After determining the **KSA's** associated with the job, try to think of some possible questions you might be asked in an interview. Tailor the questions to fit the organization and specific job that you are interviewing for. Create mock or practice interviews by asking:



**A Friend**

**A Spouse**

**A Roommate**

**A Co-worker**

## **You'll benefit from having somebody else helping you practice because:**

- 1) You will have to think on your feet since you won't know the questions in advance.**
- 2) You can receive feedback on your body language (posture, the pitch of your voice, hand movements), content, and the clarity of your answers from your Interview helper.**

**Practice, practice, practice!**

**One practice interview is not enough. If you have somebody help you, have at least three practice interviews. You'll be able to use their feedback to correct mistakes, strengthen weaknesses, and build upon strengths.**

# There are different types of job interviews and interview questions.

## Job interviews focus on:



- **What You know & are able to do** - about your work experience, education, training, goals, character, personal qualities, the job that you're seeking, the company that you're interviewing for, and the knowledge required to perform the job that you're seeking.
- **How You recognize problems or issues** - given a situation, find the problem or issue. The question may focus on a situation that you've handled in the past or how you would handle a hypothetical situation.
- **How You make decisions & identify solutions** - given the problem or issue, how do you proceed? The question may focus on a problem or issue that you've handled in the past or how you would proceed in a hypothetical situation.





# **BEHAVIORAL INTERVIEWS**

**Behavioral questions reveal details about your character and how you handle specific events and situations to the interviewer.**

**How do you resolve conflict?**

**Can you work alone?**

**Are you a team player?**

**How do you handle stress?**

**Example questions might be:**

**Tell me about a time when you had to make a decision without all of the information you required.**

**Have you ever failed at something important, and how did you handle that?**





# **INFORMATION INTERVIEWS**

**Information interviews reveal details about your career objectives, your experience, work preferences and other factors.**

## **Example questions might be:**

**What do you find as the most challenging aspect of a job?**

**What kinds of basic and advanced skills do you have that would enable you to perform this job?**

**What education and training background do you have?**

**Where do you see yourself five years from now?**

Interview questions may be straightforward or they can also address a combination of different issues.

**An example could be:**

"Can you tell us about a time at your current job where you had a conflict with a co-worker or supervisor. And, how did you handle the issue and what actions did you take?"



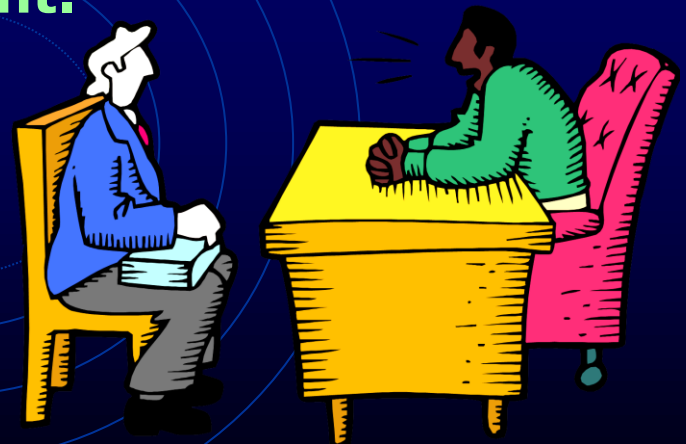
Your goal is to provide an honest answer that not only answers the question, but ALSO reinforces your skills and qualifications for the position.

The key is to be able to **act confidently**, **think clearly** during your interview **and adjust** your answers to completely answer all questions. You should cover all main points of each question and try to allow your answers to **come across sincerely and** in a **relaxed** manner.

# Remember!

**When you are answering interview questions:**

- **Don't use limiting or negative words.**
- **Don't use too much body language or move around.**
- **Use appropriate wording. No slang or hard to understand phrasing.**
- **Use action words to describe your experience.**
- **Be clear, logical and to the point.**
- **Use short sentences.**
- **Relax and stay calm.**
- **SMILE!**



# **Recognizing Inappropriate Interview Questions**

**State and Federal laws govern the interview process and the use of inappropriate questions by employers.**

**Interviews should be based on "job-related" criteria with all questions based on those criteria.**

**Here are some examples of **inappropriate** topics:**

**Age, Gender or Race:** What is your age/gender/race?

**Name/Title:** Is that Ms. or Mrs.?

**Marital Status:** Are you married or divorced?

**Childcare:** Have you made childcare arrangements?

**Ethnic origin of last name:** Is your last name Japanese?

**Language:** Does your household speak English?

**Conditions of work:** Does your family approve of you traveling?

**National origin:** Are you Chinese or Russian?

**Religion:** Are you familiar with the Catholic Church?

**Relatives:** Is your husband employed?

**Sexual preference:** How do you feel about gay people?

**Residence:** Can you handle the long commute?

# **Key success points to remember:**

- The most qualified person to do a job is someone who has already done the job. As you answer your interview questions, cite your work and life experiences in examples to reinforce to the interviewers that you've already done what they're looking for, and you've done it successfully.
- The interview will typically focus on the KSA's you've identified. If the interviewers start the interview with a description of the job, you may learn more about the job.
- Try to use the same wording as the KSA's. If you use different wording, then you are depending on the interviewers to make the connection between the words you use and the KSA's.
- Know the company and the job that you're interviewing for.
- Have an idea of the salary are you seeking and the salary typically paid by the company for the position you are seeking.

# Questions to ask the Interviewer

A great way to show your active participation in the interview process, is to ask questions. This is also helpful for determining if the job is right for you!

## Some example questions might be:

- What kind of training can I expect for this position?
- Is there a probationary period? How long is it?
- Will I be given a company handbook detailing the company's policies and procedures?
- What does the company value in its business ?
- What are the goals of the department?
- Who would I report to in the position?

# Interview “To-Do’s”

A Job Interview can be one of the most important events of your life. Your future will depend on how well you do and how well you impress your prospective new employer.



Hence, there are a number of things that you must do in order to be prepared for the task at hand.

## BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

Have you done research on the employer?

Have you practiced an interview using behavioral, informational and situational questions?

Are you confident and assertive, with clear intentions, sure of your skills, objectives and important values?

Have you chosen the clothing you will wear?



# Interview “To-Do’s”

There are items that you will need to take with you to an interview as well. Don't get caught unprepared! It may make the prospective employer feel that you are unorganized.



## ITEMS TO TAKE TO THE INTERVIEW

A summary of the research you have done on the company.

A list of questions you have prepared to ask the interviewer.

A notepad and writing tool to take notes with and write down questions.

Any additional materials you may need to present to the interviewer such as reference lists, personal identification pieces, certificates, transcripts or letters of recommendation.

A quick snack that will keep you from getting hungry in the event of a long interview.

# **Important Interview Preparation Tips**

- **Complete preparation for your interview the day before the interview.**
- **Get lots of rest so you can be alert and responsive.**
- **Don't allow yourself to be distracted or get excited over minor problems.**
- **Don't have conversations over controversial or troubling issues, or do anything that might break your concentration.**
- **Allow yourself ample time to travel to your interview. Be prepared to locate parking.**
- **Dress appropriately. Portray a professional image.**
- **Be early. If the interviewer is available, they will appreciate the opportunity to start early.**

# **TOP TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL INTERVIEW**

- 1. Don't smoke, chew gum, tobacco, or anything else.**
- 2. Make a positive and professional first impression by being assertive and giving a firm handshake to each interviewer and addressing each interviewer as they are introduced.**
- 3. Be certain to pay attention to the interviewer's name/s.**
- 4. Reinforce your professionalism and your ability to communicate effectively by speaking clearly and avoiding "ums", "you knows", and slang.**
- 5. Use positive words. Instead of "if", "I think", "I feel" and "I wish" use "when", "I am" and "I would"**
- 6. Establish a connection by relating to each interviewer. Note the wording that is used by each interviewer and when appropriate use similar words. Maintain eye contact with each of the interviewers throughout the interview.**

- 7. Sit comfortably and erectly, but don't sit stiffly, slouching or sprawled over the chair.**
- 8. Project confidence and a positive attitude. Maintain awareness of your voice, posture, energy level, and enthusiasm. Make hand gestures to emphasize important points, but avoid distracting gestures or making too many hand gestures.**
- 9. Smile confidently, but not to the point where you would appear to be too casual. Smiling will also help you relax and establish a connection with the interviewers.**
- 10. Emphasize your strengths and qualifications that make a compelling reason that you are the ideal person for the job.**
- 11. Don't dominate the interview. Time does not equal quality.**
- 12. Manage weaknesses or barriers so that they appear to be indications of your strengths.**

- 13. Be attentive. Listen to each question carefully and don't interrupt. If you aren't sure of what is being asked, politely request that the question be repeated.**
- 14. Close the interview with a strong closing statement of your qualifications for the job.**
- 15. Thank the interviewers. Shake their hands individually and thank each interviewer by name.**



**By following these tips, your interview can be an exciting and fun way to learn, develop and grow as you explore your career opportunities.**

# Finalizing Your Interview

**You have probably interviewed for a job before, and will probably interview again at some point in your career.**

**If you want to improve, learn from every interview and use what you learn on future interviews.**

**Here are some tips that will help you finalize your interview and learn how to do better in any future interviews:**



- **Have you sent a follow-up Thank You letter to the interviewer/s?**
- **Write down the questions you were asked after the interview.**
- **Think about your responses. Could you have worded or answered differently and why? Could there be a more appropriate answer?**
- **How was your behavior during the interview. Were you nervous? Did you use any "um's" or "you know's"? Did you smile? Did you use hand gestures to emphasize important points?**
- **Did you establish a connection with your interviewer/s?**

# **Remember...**

**The Job Interview is your moment to shine and show your prospective new employer how valuable you will be as a part of their Company and their Team.**



**Take the time to prepare yourself correctly and you can land that perfect Job!**



**If you need assistance preparing for a job  
interview, please call or visit us.  
We'll be happy to help!**



## **Livingston Job Service Workforce Center**

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